

UFISINAN I MAGA'HÅGA  
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

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June 26, 2019

Rear Admiral Shoshana Chatfield  
Department of the Navy  
Joint Region Marianas  
Building 200, Room 326  
Halsey Drive, Nimitz Hill  
Piti, Guam 96915

Dear Rear Admiral Chatfield:

Facing us right now are decisions of utmost importance in strengthening our national defense and preserving Guam's culture and environment. The decisions we must make on how to proceed, in the wake of recent discoveries of unknown sites, require more time.

We note that per the Programmatic Agreement ("PA"), construction work on the inadvertent discovery sites must stop and a buffer zone of 90 feet be erected around the sites of historic interest. As stipulated in the PA, an archaeologist must determine the historic significance of the site. This is a process that we understand may take upwards of 4 months.

Another matter of concern is the health, well-being, and the future of *Serianthes Nelsonii* tree. This tree is endemic to Guam and has been listed as an endangered species since 1987. During our recent trip to the tree we were informed that the boundaries of the Multi-Purpose Machine Gun Range were moved back to accommodate a buffer zone in excess of that recommended by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Admiral, I appreciate the longevity project being developed by the military to sustain the tree. However, the piece of information missing is a DNA report to determine if it shares genetic commonality with similar trees found in Rota. While the DNA report is pending, my request is that work on the Multi-Purpose Machine Gun Range, the range closest to the *Serianthes Nelsonii* tree, although accommodated by a USFWS approved buffer zone, be paused until all the facts are in concerning the health of Guam's sole, mature, endangered *Serianthes Nelsonii* tree.



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I ask that construction at the Multi-Purpose Machine Gun Range be paused until December 2019 when the DNA report is expected to be final. This action will signal to our community that you are working to ensure that the necessary protection and preservation processes are being utilized to safeguard our environment.

In the coming months, it is imperative that we work together to instill confidence in our community that both respect and care is being taken to preserve the vestiges of ancient CHamoru life and our environment, I look forward to achieving this in a new Programmatic Agreement that will provide further guidance and empower our community over the next decade. I am hopeful that we share the same sentiment. It is incumbent on us to be sure that all decisions to be made that provide for greater national security has to be equal in the protection of the CHamoru culture.

Senseramente,



LOURDES A. LEON GUERRERO

*Maga'hågan Guåhan*

Governor of Guam